AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for identifying a causal event among a plurality of events detected by a network management station on a network, which causal event is indicative of the underlying cause of more than one of said plurality of events, wherein certain of the events are related, wherein the network management station knows the topology of the network, the method performed by said network management station, and comprising the steps of:

considering the location of the network device causing each for each related event in the plurality of events by, for each event, determining the number of devices and/or links between the a network device causing the event and the network management station, and

determining as said causal event, the event for which the determined number of devices and/or links is the fewest.

Claim 2 (cancelled).

Claim 3 (previously presented): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of determining the number of devices and/or links between the device causing the event and the network management station comprises the steps of: determining the shortest path between the device causing the event and the network management station using the topology of the network and calculating the number of devices and/or links in the determined shortest path.

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Claim 4 (previously presented): A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of: receiving each event, and automatically determining the number of devices and/or links between the device causing the event and the network management station.

Claim 5 (original): A method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising storing the determined number of devices and/or links between the device causing the event and the network management station for each event.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of determining as said causal event comprises the step of: selecting as the causal event, the event for which the number of devices and/or links between the device causing the event and the network management station, is the fewest.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method as claimed in claim 1, ~~wherein prior to the step of considering, the method comprises the step of:~~ further comprising determining if said plurality of events are related, and if it is determined that said plurality of events are related, storing said plurality of related events in an event list.

Claim 8 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the step of determining if the plurality of events are related comprises determining the type of event for each of the plurality of events, and determining that said plurality of events are related if the events are of a similar type.

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Claim 9 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the method further comprises: receiving each event; and the step of determining if said plurality of events are related comprises the steps of: for each event, determining the time difference between the time of the received event and the time of the immediately preceding event, and determining that the received event is related to the immediately preceding event if the time difference is less than a predetermined time period.

Claim 10 (original): A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the predetermined time period is in the range 0 seconds to 5 minutes.

Claim 11 (original): A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein, if the received event is determined to be related, the method further comprises the step of: storing the event in a list of related events, and if the received event is determined not to be related, the method further comprises the steps of: comparing the type of events in the existing list of related events, and selecting events of a similar, relevant type.

Claim 12 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the method further comprises: receiving each event; and the step of determining if said plurality of events are related comprises the steps of: for each event, comparing the type of the received event and the type of the immediately preceding event, and determining that the received event is related to the immediately preceding event if the step of comparing finds the event type of the received event is similar to the event type of the immediately preceding event.

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Claim 13 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the method further comprises: receiving each event; and the step of determining if said plurality of events are related comprises the steps of: for each event, determining the time difference between the time of the received event and the time of the immediately preceding event, and comparing the type of the received event and the type of the immediately preceding event, and determining that the received event is related to the immediately preceding event if the time difference is less than a predetermined time period and the events are similar in type.

Claim 14 (original): A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the predetermined time period is in the range of 0 seconds to 5 minutes.

Claim 15 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the steps of, receiving each event; automatically determining if the event is related to the immediately preceding event, and if it is determined that the received event is related, storing the received event in the event list.

Claim 16 (original): A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein, if it is determined that the event is not related to the immediately preceding event, the method further comprises storing the received event in a new event list.

Claim 17 (cancelled).

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Claim 18 (original): A computer readable medium having a computer program for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 19 (previously presented): On a computer readable medium, a computer program for identifying a causal event among a plurality of events detected by a network management station on a network, which causal event is indicative of the underlying cause of more than one of said plurality of events, wherein certain of the events are related, and wherein the network management station knows the topology of the network, the computer program comprising:

program means for considering the location of the network device causing each event in the plurality of events, by, for each event, determining for each related event the number of devices and/or links between the a network device causing the event and the network management station, and

program means for determining as said causal event, the event for which the determined number of devices and/or links is the fewest.

Claim 20 (previously presented): A network management apparatus for managing a network, comprising a network management station having a processor and memory, the memory storing data representing the topology of the network, wherein the network management station is configured to monitor the network and to generate events in finding predefined event conditions; wherein the network management station is further configured to identify a causal event among a plurality of related events generated by the network management station, which causal event is indicative of the underlying cause of more than one of said plurality of related events, by:

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~~considering the location of the network device causing each event in the plurality of~~

~~events, by,~~ for each <u>related</u> event, determining the number of devices and/or links between ~~the~~ a

<u>network</u> device causing the event and the network management station, and

determining as said causal event, the event for which the determined number of devices

and/or links is the fewest.